

VIDEO AS AN EFFICIENT WAY OF THE ENGLISH STUDIES

Video is a valuable and possibly underused classroom tool. Technology allows learners who would not normally have as many opportunities to use the language they are learning in productive ways to communicate with other speakers of the target language [1, p.24].

Video as a listening tool can enhance the listening experience for our students. We very rarely hear a disembodied voice in real life but as teachers we constantly ask our students to work with recorded conversations of people they never see. This is often necessary in the limited confines of the language school and sometimes justifiable, for example, when we give students telephone practice. However, we can add a whole new dimension to aural practice in the classroom by using video. The setting, action, emotions, gestures, etc, that students can observe in a video clip, provide an important visual stimulus for language production and practice.

There are many things we can do with these clips. Here I would like to demonstrate a wide variety of them. These lesson plans refer to specific films which have been released recently, however, they could be adapted for use with a similar scene in a different film depending on availability. In the following lessons I have tried not to concentrate too much on specific dialogue that students may not be able to pick up, this allows lower level students to be creative in the classroom using video as a stepping stone to fun and communicative activities.

The activities involve pre-viewing, while-viewing and post-viewing tasks. There exist great possibilities for using video in a classroom. Still one can determine some which are generally considered to be the most common for English learning classes. They are split viewing, vision on/ sound off, observe and write, video dictogloss, watch and observe. Let's have a close look at each of them to understand how they really work.

The idea of “*split viewing*” is that work of different students in a group is organized differently. Some students see and hear a sequence; others only hear it. A variety of activities can then follow based on an information-gap procedure. For example, those students who see and hear the video are eyewitnesses to the action, the others can imagine themselves to be journalists or other interested people and try to somehow find out the necessary information to fill in the gap. This activity is particularly good for encouraging students and helping them to realize the necessity of learning English.

The idea of “*vision on/sound off*” is that students view a scene with the sound turned off. They then predict the content of the scene, write their own script and perform it while standing next to the television. After the performances students watch the scene with the sound on and decide which group was the funniest or the nearest to the original. This is a good fun exercise which is particularly efficient in emotionally charged scenes. Some of them can be very graphic with plenty of gestures to stimulate the imagination.

“*Observe and write*” is another video procedure where students view a scene (this always works better if there is a lot happening) then write a newspaper article on what they have witnessed. Students can be said to imagine working for a local newspaper or a TV channel and have to make a report on the event that has just taken place. Pre-viewing and while-viewing tasks allow them to work on new vocabulary, while the post-viewing task gives them plenty of practice and help in activation of their communicating skills.

“*Video dictogloss*” follows the dictogloss method of dictation and can easily be adapted to video. Students watch the video scene a few times and write the main words and short phrases that a particular character says. Each group is given a character and is encouraged to listen and exchange information, this usually works better if there are two characters in the scene. Working with someone from a different group, they then write the script for the scene, incorporating both characters. As they will not have managed to write down the whole script from the listening exercises they will have to use their imagination and fill in the gaps. This

gives them an excellent opportunity to work on grammar. The pre-viewing and while-viewing tasks give plenty of practice with new vocabulary.

“Watch and observe” is a good technology for lower levels because students only have to focus on a minimum of spoken dialogue. Students watch a scene from a film which has lots of things that they can see and therefore write in their vocabulary books. It’s possible to teach and test students’ vocabulary by asking a series of true/false questions and asking them to put a series of events in order.

What we have said so far in our discussion of the needs of young language learners suggests that they need to be offered opportunities to practise target language in as many ways as possible. What is missing for them in many EFL contexts is access to other language users with whom they can practise. Technology has the potential to overcome this limitation and provide learners with the opportunity to communicate with others, often native speakers of the language they are learning, or other learners studying the same language, but who don’t share the same home language, so they are forced to make use of English to communicate.

List of sources

1. Motteram, G. *Innovations in Learning Technologies for English Language Teaching* / G. Motteram. – London: British Council, 2013. – 201 c.